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THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sheriff Antionette V. Irving and the staff of the Richmond City Sheriff's Office are excited to partner again this year with the JP JumPers Foundation for the 3rd Annual JPJF #LIUB 3K Autism Walk & Festival presented by Aetna Better Health of Virginia on Sunday, April 28th, from 6pm to 9pm. April is World Autism Month and the Science Museum will join other facilities across the globe in turning its building blue. The Richmond Sheriff's Office, the Richmond Police Department, along with other law enforcement and first responders will wear blue beginning their walk from the Richmond Police Department Headquarters to show their solidarity with each other to express their joint support for individuals with Autism. Individuals are encouraged to register to walk or attend the finish line festival for FREE.

Walkers will begin at the Richmond Police Department Headquarters at 200 W. Grace Street and finish at the Science Museum of Virginia located at 2500 W. Broad Street. At the end of the walk, a free festival will take place at the Science Museum with music, food trucks, a car show, face painting, vendors, a kids' zone, a magician/juggler, and much more. Since 2017, this event has grown from 275 to over 500 participants.

About the JP JumPers Foundation

The JP JumPers Foundation was founded in 2013 by Pam Mines, six years after her son JP was diagnosed with Autism. Recognizing the need for financial support in the special needs community and to increase awareness, Pam decided to start her own non-profit organization. In addition to that, Pam also worked to establish JP's Law, which is Virginia Senate Bill 367 (SB367) that would allow individuals to VOLUNTARILY add an innocuous number/code to special Virginia DMV issued driver's licenses and/or identification cards noting they have Autism or an Intellectual Disability. This would help law enforcement be more aware of an individual's diagnosis so they could better respond to their unique abilities and limitations. The law was signed by Governor Terry McAuliffe in 2014 and currently has more than 1,400 individuals who have registered with their local DMV.

The JP JumPers Foundation provides several community programs, including the Camp Warrior Program, where children with special needs are taught how to play baseball by the Richmond Flying Squirrels Baseball Team. They also donate holiday gifts to individuals with special needs. They also have the "Wandering Project" which provides Project Lifesaver GPS devices, fences, alarm systems, etc. so individuals with developmental challenges can be found by law enforcement in case they wander off. Also, the Richmond City Sheriff's Office also participates in Project Lifesaver, which is a national program.

Autism is a developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. It is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain and occurs in approximately one of every 59 births and has no racial, ethnic or social boundaries.

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